

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the proposed district for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the district could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

General Property Information		For Staff Use Only DHR ID #: 140-0038	
District Name(s): <u>Depot Square Historic District</u>			
District or Selected Building Date(s): <u>1856 – 1929</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post Open to the Public? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Main District Streets and/or Routes: <u>Depot Sq., Wall St., and Front St.</u>		City: <u>Abingdon</u> Zip: <u>24210</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Washington</u>		USGS Quad(s): <u>Abingdon</u>	

Physical Character of General Surroundings	
Acreage: <u>6.1 acres</u> Setting (choose one): <input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Town <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Corridor	
Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features/Streetscapes: The Depot Square Historic District is located around the railway in the western end of the Town of Abingdon, one block south of West Main St. Running in an east/west direction, the Norfolk & Western railway bisects the district. Depot Sq. and the three domestic buildings at the end of Front St. run parallel to the railway, serving as the north and south borders of the district respectively. Wall St. constitutes the eastern border of the district as it runs perpendicular to the railway and adjoins the pedestrian bridge over the rail tracks, and Fuller St. runs along the western border of the district.	
Ownership Categories: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-Local <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	

General District Information	
What were the historical uses of the resources within the proposed district? Examples include: Dwelling, Store, Barn, etc... <u>Train depot, Pedestrian bridge, Dwelling, Hotel, Restaurant</u>	
What are the current uses? (if other than the historical use)	<u>Multiple dwelling, Museum/art gallery, Education/research facility, Retail</u>
Architectural styles or elements of buildings within the proposed district:	<u>Gothic Revival, Greek Revival, Italianate, Tudor Revival, Victorian Vernacular, and Commercial</u>
Architects, builders, or original owners of buildings within the proposed district:	<u>Virginia-Tennessee Railroad, Norfolk & Western Railway, James Fields, Capt. John J. Broyles, Charles E. Jones, James Bradley Crozier.</u>
Are there any known threats to this district? <u>Neglect, Future alterations</u>	

General Description of District: (Please describe building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district and a general setting and/or streetscape description.)

The Depot Square Historic District is located one block south of West Main Street and is situated around the Norfolk & Western Railway. The historic district extends through Front Street, Depot Square, and Wall Street. Seven buildings and one structure comprise the Depot Square Historic District, which are the two Norfolk & Western Railway depots, five associated buildings, and one pedestrian bridge. Three buildings are found on Front St., the two train depots are on Depot Sq., and situated on Wall St. are the two remaining buildings. A pedestrian bridge that stretches across the railway is found on the eastern border of the district.

The architectural characteristics of the Depot Square Historic District are reflective of the building styles that originated and proliferated during the Industrial Era: Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Tudor Revival, and Commercial. The three domestic buildings along Front St. are the oldest members of the district, as evident from their mid-nineteenth-century architectural features. These buildings are more vernacular in character, as these are all two-storied and simple-planned with various details from mid-nineteenth-century architectural styles, such as an overhanging Gothic Revival roof or a Greek Revival style entranceway. Serving as the center of the historic district, the two train depots on Depot Sq. are the high-styled buildings in the neighborhood. The older depot is an Italianate style one-and-a-half-story linear-planned building with prominent segmental arched windows and doors, while the younger depot is a one-story, massed-plan Tudor Revival style building boasting a steeply-pitched slate roof and a half-timbered projecting gable. Of the remaining two buildings found on Wall St., the oldest is a three-story Italianate style building with segmental arched windows and exterior pilasters and the younger is a one-story Commercial style building with basketweave brickwork along the façade roofline. The early-twentieth-century pedestrian bridge along the east border is constructed of steel framing with wooden floor planks and rests on concrete piers.

The primary building materials used in the Depot Square Historic District are wood and brick. Originally having a more utilitarian purpose and being located in a more commercial section of Abingdon, this district understandably suffered a higher degree of use than other areas of town, resulting in its present overall architectural quality as being in fair condition. The noteworthy architectural characteristics shared between the members of the Depot Square neighborhood are the simple, multiple-storied designs and symmetrical façades which are indicative of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century architecture.

Significance Statement: Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the proposed district. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Please list all sources of information. Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

The significance of the Depot Square Historic District lies in its connection to the American Civil War and its existence in relation to the Railroad Era, which introduced specific rail-related social and industrial changes. The Virginia-Tennessee Railroad placed the first railroad through Abingdon in 1856, which provided greater access to and from the town. The local brick mason and contractor, James Fields, is known to have constructed at least two of the three buildings on Front St., on which was located housing for rail workers and rail patrons. The Civil War became the first war in which the railroad played a vital role since it exponentially improved troop and supply shipping time while allowing greater control of transportation routes.¹ Union Major General George Stoneman is credited with ordering the burning of Abingdon's original train depot in 1864 during his raid of Southwest Virginia as a means to disrupt Confederate infrastructure. A new and identical depot was constructed on the same location as the previous building in 1869, which thrust Abingdon into the Railroad Era. **In 1873, the Virginia-Tennessee Railroad changed ownership and became part of the short-lived the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio Railroad, which in 1881 became part of the Norfolk and Western Railway.** N&W later constructed Abingdon's second train depot in 1910, which held modern amenities and segregated waiting rooms. During its height, the Abingdon train depot served as the center of town and the surrounding neighborhood became known as Depot Square. **Newspaper articles and personal interviews from the following decades revealed a noticeable concentration of social activity within Depot Square during this time, such as weekly dances held at the three-story brick Italianate Hattie House Hotel at 130 Wall Street, a key contributing building within the proposed historic district.**² In the article *Closed Station: Passengers (if any) Use Platform*, Wendy Buehr explained the social role of the train depot during the Railroad Era, which is applicable to the train depot in Abingdon: "For almost a century - roughly from 1850-1940 - the depot was the communications center of the town, the place that symbolized the high drama of travel, of big cities, of distant frontiers, of Opportunity and Progress - in short, of everything that small town Americans yearned for."³ Unfortunately, the decline of the railroad during the mid-twentieth-century greatly diminished the affluence of Depot Square as the train no longer acted as an artery to the outside world. The remaining eight members of the Depot Square neighborhood serve as a reminder of the significance of the Railroad Era at large and within the Town of Abingdon.

¹ Civil War Trust, "Railroads of the Confederacy," Civil War Trust, <http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/warfare-and-logistics/logistics/railroads.html> (accessed May 22, 2014).

² All newspaper sources are found in *Abstracts from Local Newspapers*, Vol. 1 by Nanci C. King and John P. Niemann and *Abstracts from Abingdon, Virginia & N.E. Tennessee Newspapers* Vol. 2 by Gerald Clark, Nanci King, Shelby I. Edwards, Wilma Smith, and Nancy E. Leasure, both are located in the Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia. Personal interviews are also located in the Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia in the Historic District Survey Form 140-38, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, *Historic Survey Washington Co., VA 140-1 to 140-39-49*.

³ Wendy Buehr and Ranulph Bye, "Closed Station: Passengers (if any) Use Platform," *American Heritage* 57 (February 1966): 33-41, quoted in Ranulph Bye, "The American Railroad Depot," *Pioneer America* 1, no. 1 (January 1969), 22.

Sponsor (Individual and/or organization, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please use a separate sheet.)

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Abingdon, VA		
(Name)			
P.O. 789, 133 West Main Street	Abingdon	VA	24212
(Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)
gjackson@abingdon-va.gov		276 628 3167	
(Email Address)		(Daytime telephone including area code)	

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Garrett Jackson

Daytime Telephone: (276) 628 3167

Applicant Information (Individual completing form)

Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>			
Ms. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Kalen Martin		
(Name)		Town of Abingdon	
(Firm)			
133 W. Main St.	Abingdon	VA	24212
(Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)
kmartin@abingdon-va.gov		276 525 1050	
(Email Address)		(Daytime telephone including area code)	
Kalen D. Martin			
Applicant's Signature:		Date: 10 June 2014	

Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

Mr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>			
Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	Greg Kelly		
(Name)		Town Manager	
(Position)			
Town of Abingdon, VA	P.O. Box 789, 133 West Main Street		
(Locality)	(Address)		
Abingdon	VA	24212	276-628-3167
(City)	(State)	(Zip Code)	(Daytime telephone including area code)

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this district.

The Town of Abingdon seeks to nominate the Depot Square neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District.

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes ☒ No ☐

Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes ☒ No ☐